



File Code: 1950
Date: March 1, 2018

Dear Interested Party,

Thank you for your interest and participation in the development of the Lakes Basin Project. Notice of pending action first appeared in the Plumas National Forest quarterly Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) as the "Lakes Basin Project" in December of 2012, and has been on each subsequent SOPA. As a result of the comments received during scoping and public meetings, the recreation and trail components of the original proposal were separated out of this project. The Beckwourth Ranger District started the NEPA scoping process in December of 2015. The Lakes Basin Project includes management activities designed to promote healthy, diverse, fire-resilient forests, maintain and promote aspen on the landscape, reduce conifer encroachment within meadows, and improve water quality. Proposed activities include: mechanical thinning, grapple piling, hand thinning, hand-piling, and underburning on 5,463 acres of National Forest System Lands. The project activities also include road maintenance, road reconstruction, temporary road construction, and decommissioning of temporary and non-system roads as necessary to meet project access needs and reduce transportation system effects.

The project area is located less than one mile southwest of the town of Graeagle, California, on the Beckwourth Ranger District of the Plumas National Forest, in Plumas and Sierra Counties, California. The project area includes approximately 12,674 acres of National Forest System lands within and adjacent to the Lakes Basin Recreation Area (LBRA). The project would encompass all or portions of T22N, R11E, Sec. 36, T22N, R12E, Sec. 21-22, 27-29, 31-34, T21N, R11E, Sec. 1, 12-13, 24, T21N, R12E, Sec. 3-6, 7-10, 15-18, 19-22, 30, Mount Diablo Base Meridian (MDBM). The project area and locations of proposed activities are shown in the enclosed maps (Figures 1 – 3).

The USDA Forest Service, Plumas National Forest, Beckwourth Ranger District has prepared the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Lakes Basin Project which is available electronically for your review at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=40964>. The materials are also available for review at the Beckwourth Ranger District, 23 Mohawk Road, Blairsden, California.

How to Comment and Timeframe:

Written comments concerning this action will be accepted for 30 calendar days following the publication of the notice in the *Feather River Bulletin and Portola Reporter*. The publication date in the newspaper of record is the exclusive means for calculating the comment period for this proposal. Those wishing to comment should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other sources. Regulations prohibit extending the length of the comment period. The purpose of this comment period is to provide an opportunity for the public to provide meaningful participation on a proposed action prior to a decision being made.

Individuals and entities who submit specific written comments at this stage will be eligible to object under 36 CFR 218, as described below. Issues raised in objections must be based on previously-submitted written comments specific to the proposed project or activity unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the opportunities for comment. It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the close of the comment period. It is the responsibility of persons providing comments by electronic means to ensure that their comments were received.



Written comments must be submitted to the Responsible Official, Matthew Jedra, District Ranger, c/o Gretchen Jehle, Project Leader, Beckwourth Ranger District, P.O. Box 7, Blairsden, CA, 96103. Written comments may also be hand delivered to 23 Mohawk Road, Blairsden, CA, 96103 between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Oral comments must be provided during normal business hours via telephone or in person at the address above.

In an effort to reduce paper use, the Forest Service will emphasize electronic correspondence. Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), portable document format (.pdf), or Word (.doc or .docx) to:

comments-pacificsouthwest-plumas-beckwourth@fs.fed.us

Please include “**Lakes Basin Project**” in the subject line of your message.

Objection Process Information: In 2013, a new rule (36 CFR 218) replaced the previous appeal rules (36 CFR 215). 36 CFR 218 provides the public an opportunity to comment and/or object before a decision is made. Following this 30-day comment period, a 45-day object period will be initiated with an objection legal ad published in the *Feather River Bulletin and Portola Reporter* and providing the final EA and draft Decision Notice for review. In order to be eligible to file an objection, specific written comments related to the project must be submitted during scoping or any other periods during which public comment is specifically requested for this project (218.5). Names and addresses of those who comment and/or file objections will become part of the public record. Individuals and organizations wishing to be eligible to object must meet the information requirements of 36 CFR 218. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to a comment, a verification of identity will be required for objection eligibility. If using an electronic message, a scanned signature is one way to provide verification. Individual members of organizations must have submitted their own comments to meet the requirements of eligibility as an individual; objections received on behalf of an organization are considered as those of the organization only.

I want to thank you for your involvement in this project. I also want to emphasize that the objection process discussed above pertains to our overall NEPA process. This process does not in any way diminish my responsibilities to address your comments and concerns.

If you have questions or concerns with this project please contact Gretchen Jehle, Project Leader, at (530) 836-7157 or gjehle@fs.fed.us.

Thank you for your interest in public land management and this important forest health project.

Sincerely,



MATTHEW JEDRA
District Ranger

3 Enclosures

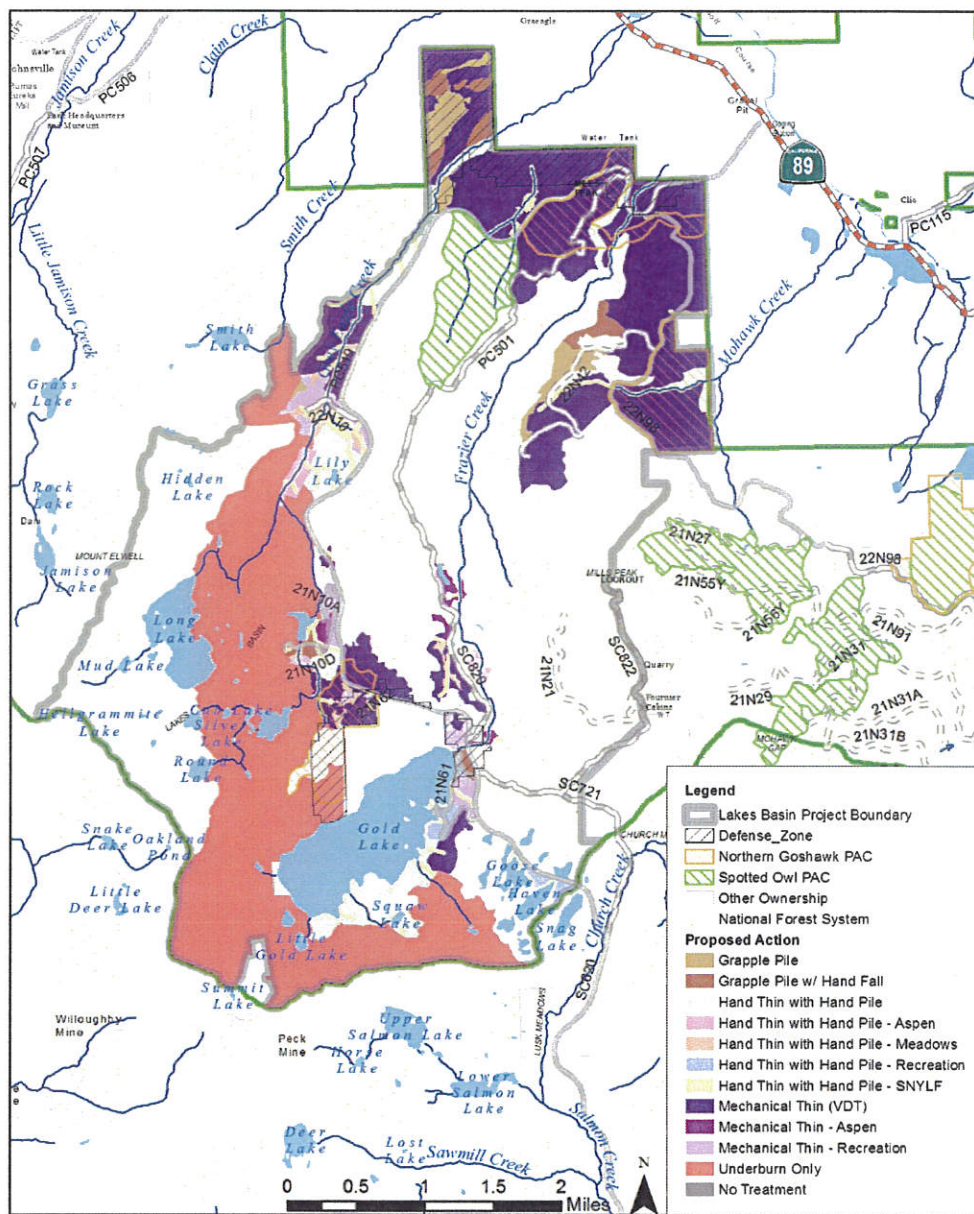


Figure 1. Lakes Basin Project Alternative 1 Proposed Treatments

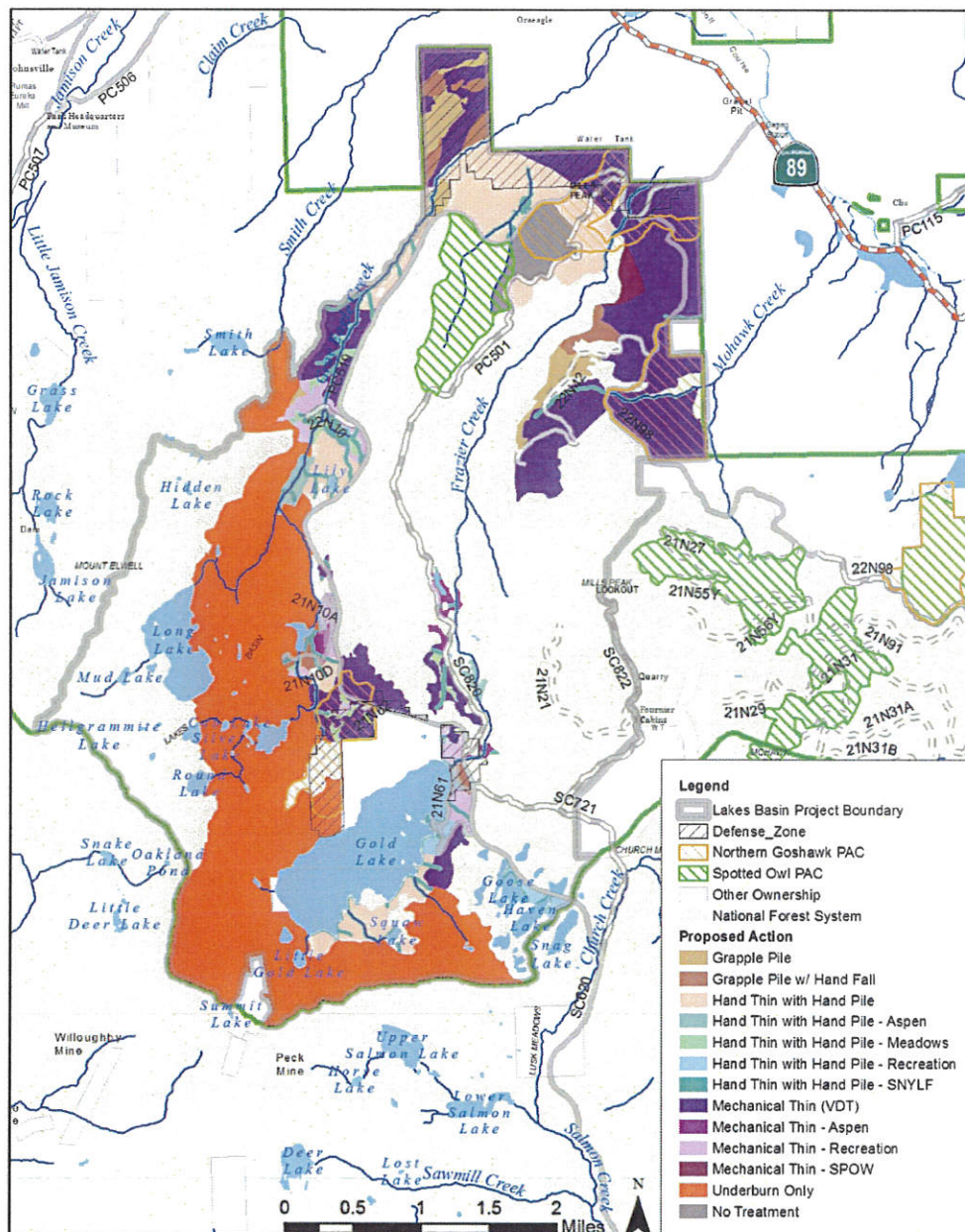


Figure 2. Lakes Basin Project Alternative 2 Proposed Treatments

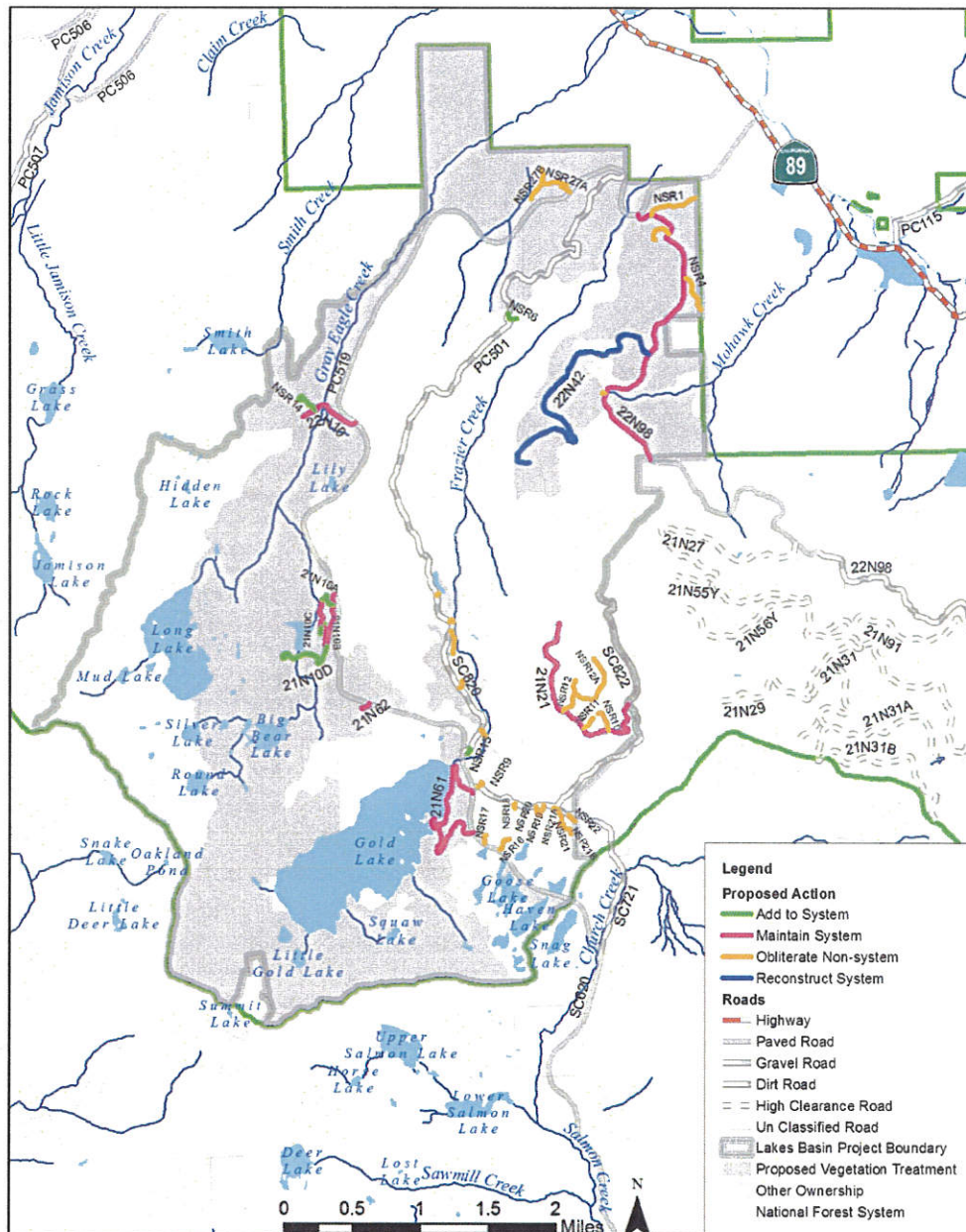


Figure 3. Lakes Basin Project Proposed Road Actions